



**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
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Statement by Maritime Administrator Albert J. Herberger on Signing of Maritime Security Act

I have the privilege of serving as Maritime Administrator in an Administration which recognizes that the nation's transportation system does not stop at water's edge. Our ports and harbors, tugs and barges, oceangoing ships and Great Lakes vessels, as well as the nation's shipyards and supplier industries all contribute to our economic well being and our strategic security.

From the outset of his tenure, Secretary Peña made securing the future of our nation's maritime industries a priority. He has maintained this vision -- and his determination -- through some difficult times, and we are grateful. We are grateful, too for President Clinton's determination to preserve jobs for American citizens, and his support of this vital industry.

We look forward to implementing the Maritime Security Program established by the bill being signed into law today. The new program will support an active, privately owned, U.S.-flag and U.S.-crewed merchant shipping fleet that will provide sustainment sealift capability in time of war or national emergency.

This legislation will deregulate outdated requirements attached to the previous maritime program, it will reduce the Government's cost by more than half, and it will help to bring about a more modern and competitive maritime fleet.

We are anxious to get on with the business of implementing this legislation. We now have in place a policy and a program to ensure that modern commercial vessels will continue to fly our flag, promote our commerce, employ skilled American seafarers, and answer the call to serve our country whenever needed.

To all who have worked so hard to make it possible, including especially bipartisan members of both Houses of Congress, goes our sincere appreciation.

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